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## **STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON THE FATE OF STRANDED MIGRANTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

**Addis Ababa, 12 June 2018:** The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, commends the Government of Spain for giving safe harbour to over 600 migrants, including women and children, who were stranded in the Mediterranean Sea since Sunday 10 June 2018.

"Migrants in distress, irrespective of their origin and legal status, deserve the necessary protection under international law," Chairperson Faki said. "European Union Member States must demonstrate their commitment to our shared commitments to address the immediate safety and human rights of all migrants within and across borders, while tackling the underlying causes driving illegal migration," Chairperson Faki emphasised.

The African Union-led Joint Task Force with the European Union and the United Nations to address the plight of African migrants in Libya will continue to work with the Libyan authorities to close all illegal migrant detention centers and step up efforts to dismantle the illegal trafficking and smuggling networks in the region.

In this regard, the African Union Commission commends the United Nations Security Council for the imposition of sanctions on six individuals accused of leading smuggling and trafficking networks of migrants in Libya.

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